UNITED
NATIONS

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Secretariat

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ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services

Subject: USE OF UNITED NATIONS PREMISES FOR MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SPECIAL EVENTS AND EXHIBITS

A. Introduction

1. This instruction provides guidelines and procedures for the authorization of the use of United Nations premises for meetings, conferences, special events and exhibits.

2. Meeting rooms and conference facilities and services at United Nations Headquarters are intended to be used primarily for meetings and conferences scheduled under the calendar of conferences approved by the General Assembly, and informal meetings of regional or other established groups of Member States on the request of the Chairman of the group, in accordance with established procedure.

3. All requests for the use of premises other than those for intergovernmental and expert meetings noted in paragraph 2 above must be submitted in writing for appropriate authorization as described in section B below. Criteria for the use of United Nations premises are contained in section D below.

B. Procedures for requesting the use of premises for meetings, conferences, special events and exhibits

4. All requests for the use of United Nations premises, including the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium and Penthouse, for meetings, conferences and special events, other than those noted in paragraph 2 above and paragraph 5 below, should be addressed directly to the Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services. Requests should be made at least three weeks in advance of the proposed meeting or event, and should contain information

relating to the nature of the proposed meeting or event, particularly the programme, sponsors, if any, and the number of participants expected to attend, including a list of guests who do not hold United Nations identification cards. The meetings and events referred to include the following:

(a) Meetings or events sponsored by a Permanent or Observer Mission to the United Nations;

(b) Meetings called or sponsored officially by the United Nations, by departments or offices of the Secretariat, or by organizations or agencies of the United Nations system;

(c) Conferences and meetings of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, on the request of the Non-Governmental Organizations Unit of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development;

(d) Briefings for public groups and non-governmental organizations associated with the Department of Public Information, on the request of the Department of Public Information;

(e) Meetings of the Staff Council and its subsidiary bodies, on the request of the President of the Staff Committee;

(f) Meetings of clubs sponsored by the United Nations Staff Recreation Council, on the request of an officer of the club and endorsed by the President of the Staff Recreation Council, or an officer of the Executive Committee designated by the President.

5. In the case of the meetings or events listed below, the procedure indicated should be followed:

(a) In accordance with the guidelines contained in administrative instruction ST/AI/376 of 1 June 1992, all official exhibits on United Nations premises are subject to review and approval by the United Nations Exhibits Committee. A written request for an exhibit must be addressed to the Exhibits Committee by the head of the requesting organ or body. Once a request for an exhibit has been approved, it will be forwarded by the Exhibits Committee to the Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services to identify the appropriate space and to make the necessary arrangements. Any other request for the use of premises which may include an exhibit should be addressed within the context of paragraph 4 above, as appropriate;

(b) From September to December each year, with the exception of the United Nations Day Concert, the General Assembly Hall is used solely for the meetings of the General Assembly. Requests for permission to use the Hall during the rest of the year should be addressed to the Director of the General Assembly Affairs Division, Department of Political Affairs. Requests for special events should be made at least three months in advance of the proposed event and should contain the information requested in paragraph 4 above. Once a request is approved, it is forwarded to the Assistant Secretary-General for Conference and Support Services to arrange for the necessary services and equipment.

Permission to use the Hall is granted on the understanding that, should the Assembly need to meet at a time when the use of the Hall has been authorized for another meeting or event, the sponsor of that meeting or event would have to make alternate arrangements;

(c) Requests for events to be held in the designated dining facilities at United Nations Headquarters should be sent to the Banquet Director, United Nations Catering Service.

C. Coordination of services and equipment

6. Once the Office of Conference and Support Services has approved a request for the use of United Nations premises to hold a meeting or event, designated officials in that Office will coordinate with the appropriate departments and offices for the provision of the services and equipment required for the meeting or event.

D. Criteria for the use of United Nations premises

7. In using United Nations premises, due respect must be maintained for the dignity of the Organization. Proposed meetings and events must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and must be non-commercial in nature. The Office of Conference and Support Services reserves the right to refuse or cancel any meeting or event that it considers to be inconsistent with the objectives of the Organization.

8. Meetings or events called or sponsored officially by the United Nations, by departments or offices of the Secretariat, or by specialized agencies of the United Nations system, should form part of the approved programme of work of the Organization and should have a direct relationship with the work programme of the requesting organizational unit. This includes meetings of outside organizations sponsored by the relevant department or office as part of its work programme. Requests of this nature must be made by a responsible official of the department or office, and an official of the sponsoring department or office must attend and preside over the event. The sponsoring department or office will be fully responsible for the programme content of the meeting or event.

9. When a meeting or event is sponsored by a Permanent or Observer Mission, as set out in paragraph 4 (a) above, once authorization for the meeting or event has been given by the Office of Conference and Support Services, a ranking member of the Mission must act as the liaison to the Office of Conference and Support Services for the coordination of all organizational and financial arrangements for the meeting or event being sponsored. A member of the Mission must attend and preside over the meeting or event in its entirety. The sponsoring Mission will be fully responsible for the programme content of the meeting or event.

10. Use of the United Nations premises for meetings or events sponsored by the clubs of the United Nations Staff Recreation Council will only be granted for

the purpose of staff recreation and in keeping with the stated objectives of the member clubs.

11. Outside entities, including non-governmental organizations, may not hold meetings or events on United Nations premises to conduct their own organizational business or to advance their own purposes or aims.

E. Costs for meetings and events

12. If the meeting or event requires that United Nations staff or contractual staff be diverted from their regular functions to provide requested services, or if overtime costs are incurred either because the services are performed during the lunch hour or outside of normal working hours, the sponsor will be charged for those costs. The sponsor will also be charged for all costs related to the provision of technical or special equipment necessary for the conduct of the meeting or event. It will be the responsibility of the Office of Conference and Support Services to provide estimates of the costs involved, based on established rates. Final costs will be determined according to the services and equipment actually provided. Billing will be carried out by the Accounts Division of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts.

13. Should a sponsor fail to meet the final costs of a meeting or event, future requests for meetings or events will be refused until the arrearage is paid.

F. Insurance

14. For most meetings and events that are held other than under the auspices of the United Nations, it is necessary for the sponsoring department or office, or Permanent or Observer Mission to receive clearance from the Insurance Section of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts. In order to receive clearance, the sponsor must provide the Chief of the Insurance Section with a certificate of insurance in adequate limits, including liquor liability coverage as appropriate, specifically covering the United Nations against third-party liability claims. Such a certificate must be furnished to the Insurance Section two weeks prior to the scheduled event. The Office of Conference and Support Services will inform the sponsor of the meeting or event if a certificate of insurance is required.

G. Conclusion

15. The present instruction supersedes administrative instructions ST/AI/335 of 11 July 1986, entitled "Use of United Nations premises for meetings, conferences and public events", and ST/AI/282 of 10 December 1981, entitled "Use of United Nations premises for meetings and catering services". This instruction should also be read in conjunction with ST/AI/387 of 10 September 1993, entitled "Security arrangements for admission to United Nations Headquarters".